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ABSTRACT

This study examined institutional analysis reports of sixteen teacher education institutions in West Virginia to see how two sections of the state standards affected the governance of the institutions. The standards required that: (1) the institutions provide an organizational structure that ensures cooperative program planning in all disciplines; and (2) the institutions maintain a standing policy-recommending body for program planning and evaluation. The standing body should be representative of public school personnel, college faculty, teacher education students, and professional educators. Among the findings were: (1) All of the institutions reported the existence of a standing body, although variations in scope of representation, size, means of selection, and frequency of meetings were evident; (2) Not all of the institutions complied with the requirement that the standing body make policy recommendations or have program planning or evaluation responsibilities; and (3) The standing bodies functioned at various stages of planning, from initiating and deliberating to implementing. It can be concluded that, although the standards have imposed restrictions, diversity and freedom still exist in the institutions. (FG)

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CBTE AND TEACHER EDUCATION GOVERNANCE

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STRUCTURED DIVERSITY IN THE GOVERNANCE OF TEACHER EDUCATION IN A COMPETENCY BASED TEACHER EDUCATION (CBTE) STATE

PROBLEM

Competency based teacher education provides objectives (guidelines and standards) which must be met in the process of teacher training in order for the prospective teacher to be certified. The plans for meeting the objectives/guidelines/standards must, in some way, be attested to by the state or other accrediting agency in order for the teacher education institution to be accredited and, thus, to produce certified teachers. The basic question to which this study is addressed is "What is the degree of conformity to which teacher education institutions are pushed when required to meet the same standards." The specific issue is that of governance of teacher education within an institution. The governance guideline (called a standard) states that

> 2.0 The institution shall provide an organizational structure which will assure that the building of the teacher education program is a cooperative endeavor and that each curriculum is a product of all disciplines and personnel involved in its operation.
>
> 2.1 The institution shall maintain a standing teacher education body representative of those who have a major concern in teacher education. The membership, responsibilities, and functions of this body shall be clearly defined. Among the primary responsibilities of this policy-recommending body are program planning and evaluation. All proposals regarding teacher education shall be submitted to this body for consideration and recommendation prior to implementation. This body shall be representative of the public school personnel, college faculty in subjects related to public school instruction, teacher education students, professional educators, and others deemed essential by the institution.
>
> Standard for the Approval of Teacher Education Programs in West Virginia (4th Ed., p. 9)

With standards so demanding, how can institutions retain their own individuality and integrity? This is the question for this study.

HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE

At the time of this study (1980) CBTE had been in effect in West Virginia long enough that all 17 (16 undergraduate) teacher education institutions (that is, institutions which prepare teachers for certification in WV, regardless of whether such has historically been their primary purpose) have been visited twice by an accrediting team. The first visit investigated the compliance of the institution with the Standards; the second investigated the compliance in those aspects which were found not in full compliance the first time. Several institutions had also been visited a third time, again to investigate remaining areas of non-compliance. Thus, the first CBTE compliance cycle has been completed and both the standards and the review processes are currently being reviewed. The accrediting process in WV includes the following steps:

1. A self study is completed whereby the institution explicates the ways in which it is in compliance with each standard or substandard. (288 pages of standards if all possible programs are included)
2. An accrediting team composed of college faculty, public school personnel, and SDE members visits and determines to what extent the written documents produced in step one match the actual practices.
3. A decision is made by a voting team for each institutional standard and program area. The decison can be appealed for reevaluation.

This, then, is the process through which each of the institutions considered in this project has gone. The standards which are considered are Institutional Standards 2.0 and 2.1, a part of "Institutional Standard II: Organization and Administration," one of eight institutional standards which must be met across the board and by each program area (specific teaching area). While CBTE in West Virginia and other states has been questioned on a number of bases: for example, the ability to determine and to specify measurable competencies teachers must have and the desirability of similarity within and across institutions, this study focuses on another issue of controversy, that of governance. The standards require that governance of teacher education involve

1. a standing body representing all who have a major concern in teacher education (public school personnel, college faculty in subjects related to public school personnel, teacher education students, professional educators, and others if desired)
2. clearly defined membership, responsibilities, and functions
3. program planning and evaluation as primary responsibilities
4. consideration and recommendation of all teacher education proposals before implementation
5. a policy recommending body (as written, the standard is not clear whether it restricts the body to recommending or mandates that it must recommend while it may decide)

There are points of concern within these five requirements for teacher educators who must live with them. These include

1. Inclusion of public school personnel (this is of special concern in some areas where the teacher education students must do field experiences in a given system but intend to teach in other states, a situation faced by private colleges frequently. Inclusion of specific local personnel is seen as necessary for public relations but often too parochial for good teacher education).
2. Inclusion of teacher education students (traditional colleges do not think it is sound educational practice to allow students to be part of the decision making process).
3. Decision making (program planning and evaluation) by those other than bonafide, degreed, teacher educators.
4. Consideration and recommendation before implementation (When the change process approaches two years in some institutions, the requirement that the standing body consider and recommend before implementation has potential for conflicting with the requirement for cooperative program building. Institutions by design or intent can eliminate the committee from meaningful participation by placing their "consider and recommend" function just before implementation; not only would a committee hesitate to recommend negatively something which had taken two years to enact but if such a negative or revisionary recommendation were made, its chances to have impact at such a late stage are negligible.)

In addition to these direct concerns about the governance of teacher education which arise from State Standards 2.0 and 2.1, an underlying concern

exists. While the state may have the right to determine the program area competencies for teacher education students in the state, does it have the right to change governance structures, especially in private colleges which do not receive direct state aid? And, the corollary consideration, does the governance structure make any difference in the competencies and quality of teacher education in an institution?

While this study does not attempt to respond to the last two concerns, it will suggest that a major factor in the way any institution has met standards 2.0 and 2.1 will be its belief about the legitimacy of the standards. (Another important factor is the belief the institution has about the rigidity of the standards and the acceptability of going beyond what the standards require; while the standards have repeatedly been described as minimum, the safety of doing exactly what is required must have appeal especially to an institution found not to be in compliance in an earlier examination.) Thus, this study will examine how the teacher education institutions meet standards 2.0 and 2.1: what options appear to be available to the institutions in view of the ones which have been found acceptable; what other options, if any, while not tried might be acceptable; and the value of these composite findings in providing options for all parties within CBTE governance mandates.

COLLECTION OF DATA

After the area of concern was selected, specific questions which would result in meaningful, quantifiable responses were proposed and refined by the researchers. These questions were

1. Who is on the standing teacher education body?
2. How often does it meet?

3. What is its responsibilities?
4. Where does it fit into the political decision making?
5. What effect has it had?

The researchers arranged to use the library of institution documents in the State Department of Education; the arrangements were made without the specific thrust of the investigation being specified so that no contamination of the findings might occur.

For this study the Institution Analysis Report was used; the IAR for the year in which compliance was found, not necessarily the first IAR prepared by the institution, was used as the source of the data.

It should be noted that each of the researchers has been involved in the accreditation process of her institution and that two of them (Marks and Larson) have had major roles in that process. While bias may appear, since it is difficult for one to be involved deeply without forming opinions and convictions, the bias would be more likely to appear in discussion than in findings. The findings were taken directly from the standard 2 and 2.1 sections of the narrative for each institution. (See Appendix A for list of institutions.)

FINDINGS

Question one asked who was on the standing body for teacher education, a body required to be representative of public school personnel, college teachers in subjects related to public school instruction, teacher education students, and professional educators.

Each institution did report the existence of such a body; two institutions reported two formal bodies and one reported three. Others reported subcommittees of faculty or department committees which were a part of the

advisorty process but not, in and of themselves, the representative standing committee. Each of the four required groups (public school personnel, college teachers - subject, college teachers - teachered, and teacher education students) were represented at each institution but all four were not necessarily on the same committee.

Insert Table 1 about here

The precise composition of the committee was difficult to discern in many cases since it depended upon the number of approved teacher education programs, the number of faculty in a department, or simply a floating number of representatives in a category (3-5 public school teachers); individuals representing two areas (i.e. English and English education) at the given moment also created variance. The range in size of committee appeared to be from 7-30. Most committees who included public school personnel and/or students had more than one representative.

Nearly all committees clearly specified both public school administration and faculty or supervising teachers; several indicated that these representatives were drawn from a multicounty area while two specifically limited their representation to the home county of the institution.

Teacher education students representing different specializations and chosen by the professional organization or student governing organization were the norm; however both non-teacher education specializations and department faculty appointed were also included.

The preponderance of the membership of committee was the representation of department of education faculty and academic specialty faculty. In one case, it was specified that the faculty representatives were chosen by their peers while in another case it was clear that the methods instructors

(not the subject area instructors) represented the academic departments. Education department administrators were included as were the directors of field experiences, or similar titles, from about half of the group. College administrators were included about three quarters of the time; this representation was both from the Academic Dean and from the Office of Student Affairs. On one committee at a multicommittee campus, the parents of public school students were also represented.

Thus, while the standards mandate a standing body representative of at least four groups, variance does occur. The size of the body varies, the relative weighting by numbers of members varies, the means of selection varies, the definition of representative varies, and the categories of membership vary. Institutions have no choice about the existence of the body, or even of its basic structure, but they have exerted much individuality in clothing the body for the governance of teacher education in their own institutional style.

Question two asked how often this standing body met? The standards (2.0, 2.1) do not specify the frequency of meetings for the committee; for this reason, perhaps, ten institutions did not specify the frequency of meeting of any committee. The range of those who did was from "almost weekly" to 2 per year.

Insert Table 2 about here

This existing range suggests that variance does occur within the boundaries of a standard which does expect a committee to meet!

Question three asked for the responsibilities of the committee. Standard 2.1 specifically named program planning and evaluation as "among the primary responsibilities" of the committee. It further mandated that all teacher education proposals go the committee for consideration and recommendation before they are implemented. Finally, Standard 2.1 states that this committee (body) is a policy-recommending group.

Insert Table 3 about here

Thirteen of the sixteen colleges listed policy recommending as one responsibility of a committee; thirteen (though not the same thirteen) specifically named program planning, and eleven named evaluation as among the responsibilities. Four indicated that the committee must approve policy or program changes with one of the four stating that the committee is nearly completely autonomous.

Other responsibilities of the committee are admission and retention (9 institutions), coordination/dissemination/liason work, both inter and intra institution (7 institutions), program development and introduction (4 institutions) and other activities (5 institutions). Thus, where it is clear that the responsibilities must be stated and must include specific activities, not all institutions do consider the three activities among those for which their institutional committee has responsibilities. (note: Since each of these institutions has been approved on all parts of standard 2, the evidence noting compliance may be in supplementary documents or in the oral on-site evaluation). Further, three major categories of duties have been added for the committees and the expectation that the body be a recommending body has become the body as decision making in four of the colleges. In the case of the responsibilities/functions of

the committee it appears that the mandate was closely but not completely followed and that it was taken as a minimum mandate with a variety of institutional changes made and accepted.

Question four asked where the committee fit into the political action schema of the institution. Because of the differences in decision making processes among the institutions in addition to the differences in reporting, the committees have been divided into three reporting groups: Initiating (those committees that act in the early stages of decision making and with one or no prior steps in the process); Deliberating (those committees who act in the middle points of the process, regardless of how long it is, and who have the same number of steps preceding and succeeding them in the process) and Implementing (those which appear near the end of the process shortly before implementation and having nearly all steps—except perhaps the mandated referral to the State Department of Education and State Board of Regents).

Insert Table 4 about here

Five institutions placed their committees as Initiating ones; four as Deliberating and three as Implementing. Since four did not report clearly enough to discern the position of the committee, the total number of committees is 14; one college did report the position of both of its standing committees.

The committees report to everyone from the Department of Education Chairperson to the State Department of Education with a majority reporting to another college committee.

The standard requirement that the body be a standing committee and that it have policy recommending status has been interpreted by the colleges to mean that it functions in the early or middle or late parts of the institutional process. As long as the committee exists and completes its minimal functions, it is in compliance with the standard. The committees do appear to function at every conceivable point on the decision making chart.

Question five querried to what degree the committees were effective. Since no standard requests or requires the accomplishments of the committee, information contained in the IAR was extra and in most cases no information existed. However, in two cases where the committee has control of teacher education and in the case of the committee that meets nearly weekly, the accomplishments were clearly identified and included in the body or appendix of the report. It may be, as was explicitly stated by one institution, that the committee was too new at the time of writing to have made major decisions. It may also be that those near the implementation point or those meeting infrequently do not perceive themselves as having made noteworthy accomplishments. At any rate, where comment was made, it appeared to be a matter of pride.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATION

It is without question that Competency Based Teacher Education in West Virginia places restrictions on institutions preparing teachers. The idea of a preset competency seems to automatically restrict on-the-spot choice and individuality. The standards in West Virginia related to the body which governs teacher education are among the most prescriptive of

the entire compilation of standards. This study asked if there were freedom and diversity within the standards. (While the reasonableness or legality or morality/ethics of such a standard are interesting questions, they are not the concern of this study). The answer to the question must be yes. Diversity (sixteen diverse combinations of composition, task, and decision status) exists in teacher education. Major colleges, smaller "grown-up teachers' colleges," and private liberal arts colleges each chose to meet State Standards 2.0 and 2.1 in ways compatible with their entire institutional thrust and with the history and complexity of the institution. Within this one dimension, then, diversity and freedom do exist. The standards must be met but the ways of meeting them are many and the many are acceptable. Competency Based Teacher Education exists in a minority of states but the need to prepare more competent teachers is seen as so urgent that it has even been featured in a major newsmagazine. Increased reliance on the National Teachers' Exam, state mandated experiences (Ohio, for example, now requires 300 planned, supervised, and evaluated field experience hours prior to student teaching), and competency based programs such as West Virginia's are three responses to the urgency. For those of you facing some kind of response, the evidence is the CBTE does not have to be the fettering ogre that it is reputed to be. There are considerations you will want to make:

1. Don't panic.
2. Be a part of the planning process both state and local; be sure that others who are a part are competent educators.
3. Look for all the places where options can be taken; take the options that fit your need.

4. Be sure that the system designed to implement your CBTE is one with which you can live and one which supports the entire philosophy of the teacher education organization.
5. If you end up with something you are less than happy with, see how much freedom <u>you</u> can find.

Table 1

Composition of Teacher Education Standing Bodies

Areas Represented	Number of Institutions
Public School Administration	13
Public School Faculty	12
College Administration	12
Teacher Education Administration	13
College Faculty	17
Teacher Education Faculty	17
Teacher Education Student	18
Non Teacher Education Student	2
Other - Parent	1

Note. Some institutions have more than one Standing Body.

Table 2

Frequency of Standing Body Meetings

Frequency	Number of Institutions
More than 1/month	2
One per month	1
Two per semester	2
Three per year	1
One per semester	1

Table 3

Responsibilities of Standing Body

Responsibilities	Number of Institutions
Program Planning	13
Program Evaluation	11
Program Recommending	13
Admission and Retention	9
Program Implementation	4
Coordination/Dissemination	7
Implementation of Standards	2

Note. Some institutions have more than one Standing Body.

Table 4

Placement of Standing Body in Decision Making Line

Placement	Number of Institutions
Initiatory	5
Deliberating	4
Implementing	3
Unclear	4

Appendix A: West Virginia Teacher Education Institutions

Alderson-Brdaddus College

Bethany College

Bluefield State College

Concord College

Davis & Elkins College

Fairmont State College

Glenville State College

Marshall University

Morris Harvey College (now University of Charleston)

Salem College

Shepherd College

West Liberty State College

West Virginia University

West Virginia State College

West Virginia Institute of Technology

West Virginia Wesleyan College